Work Term 2

Career Development Report

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Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

0   Introduction

0.1   Outline

This report serves to probe the progression of career development. This report is written with intent to achieve helping us gauge our current desired career path by reviewing the skills obtained throughout the work term, as well as future desired skills that would be necessary for future careers.

The report is broken down into four parts to help us understand what is it we need to proceed in our career development: industry in current work term, current skills being obtained, desired future industry, and transferable skills that might aid us reaching there.

The report will also briefly describe the company and the industry it takes position in. The studio that I work for is BioWare, which is a subsidiary of a larger publisher, Electronic Arts (EA).

0.2   Scope

The scope of report consists of analysis of skills and duty pertained to me and future desired skills. The report will not include details about the game, engine, or other technology used during the work term that helped me obtaining skills or reach my objectives.

0.3   Industry

EA or BioWare, like many other studios or publishers exist in the market right now falls into the consumer entertainment industry. The products produced is associated with Microsoft and Sony as they develop the hardware the games will run on. Future industries I wish to work in consist of electronics development or robotics and control systems.

Work Term Industry (section 1) provides insight the industry with which we are currently working and competing in. This section outlines the company's position and its competitions in the gaming and or online entertainment and content delivery industry.

0.4   Company

BioWare is founded in 1995, is a video game studio in Edmonton, AB. Now it is a division of Electronic Arts (EA). The studio is infamous for its story-driven games with rich, branched quests including franchises such as Mass Effect and Dragon Age [1] [2] [3].

There is a pipeline of games the studio outputs, the latest one being Anthem, showcased at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in 2017 and 2018. The game so far has won many E3 awards.

My position is an associate developer on the UI/UX team for the game Anthem. Mostly developing engine tools, and elements the scriptwriters and artists can then use to add feature into the game.

1   Work Term Industry

The "root" industry is consumer entertainment. This includes games, TV shows, movies, sports, etc. It is to be noted that even though the BioWare studio develops games, the publisher is associated with franchises in films such as Star Wars and sports such as NHL, NBA, Madden, etc.

The more specific work term industry this belongs to is the "video game industry" [6]. The industry consists of hardware development and manufacturing (such as video game consoles, controllers, computers,

etc.), software (programming, servers and infrastructures), and content creation (art, videos). The following graph breaks down the roles for video game industry [7] (at least in the perspective of EA).
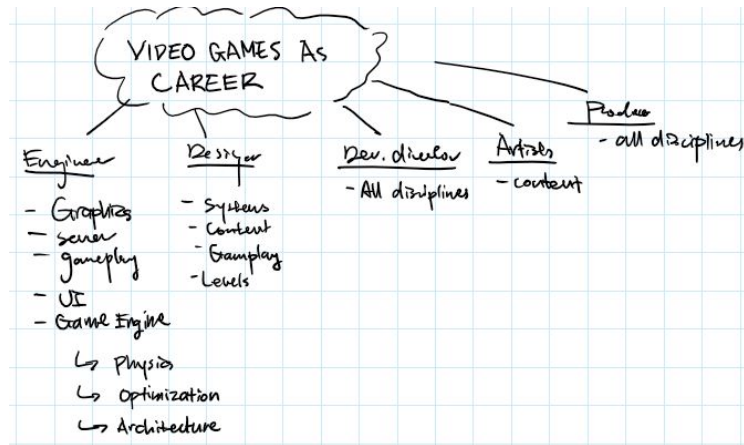

Figure 1: Video game as career

One competitor in the industry, Rockstar, and their most recent products Grand Theft Auto V (GTA 5) has become the most profitable product in the industry [5]. With a total revenue of $6 billion, it has made "more money than any film, book, or game".

2   Obtained Skills

The obtained technical skills include: - Gained more programming experience in C++ - specifically, OOP and design patters for games engines (render thread, simulation thread, UI handling) - Gained experience in writing C# for applications - Increased learning skill of using propriatery engine editor - Visual scripting - Use python to write upgrade script for game assets - Understood the structure and serialization of these assets, as well as the entities and links within - Use enterprise level version control Perforce - Work with packages and modules that are separated from the game codebase - Agile methodologies including code review, creating and resolving JIRA tasks - Contributing to the documentation (confluence, wiki, etc) - Improved debugging skills in Visual Studio
Social skills: - Asking for help from anyone in the office - Participating in design review

3   Desired Future Industry

I have two options: 1. (Depth) - Continue down the software development path on UI/UX or app development. Although drifted from area of study, could be a viable option to consolidate existing skills and experiences
Possible industries: - Software development (Microsoft, Google, Startups) - Video game industy (Coming back to EA or other game publishers)
2. (Breadth) - Try something else to expand my set of skills to different areas. - Include and apply knowledge more related to area of study (electronics, mechanical, controls, robotics, PCB, etc)

4 Transferable Skills

Conclusion

References

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[7] Some guest speaker ¡todo¿